

REMARKS

In the office action dated March 18, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 6. Applicant has amended claims 1 and 4, and also canceled claims 3 and 6. The Examiner's comments and rejections are addressed below in the order they were presented in the Office Action.

Election/ Restrictions

The Examiner required Applicant to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. During a phone call on March 3, 2005, Applicant's attorney, Thomas D. Kohler made a provisional election with traverse to prosecute the invention of Species B, Figs. 1 and 4-5, claims 1 and 3-6, in which claim 1 is generic. As such, claim 2 was withdrawn. Once again, Applicant affirms this election in the response to the Office Action.

Specification

The Examiner objected to the Abstract as containing legal phraseology "means." As such, Applicant has amended the Abstract by removing "a movement conversion means" and replacing it with "a ring gear, planetary gears, sun gear and/or racks formed at the steering rod" and "a rotator ring, a plurality of pinions, worm gears and a plurality of racks formed at the steering rod." Support for this amendment can be found in Paragraphs [0027] and [0035] of the specification, respectively. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

The 35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,024,187 ("Takeda") in view of Japanese Patent No. JP363262074A ("Onuma"). Applicant, however, traverses the rejection in light of the amendments.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of canceled claim 3 by further reciting the movement conversion means. Thus, support for this amendment is also provided. As will be further discussed, Takeda in view of Onuma does not teach and every limitation of canceled claim 3. As such, Takeda in view of Onuma also does not teach and

every limitation of amended claim 1. In addition, Applicant has canceled claim 6, so this rejection is now moot in light of the cancellation of claim 6. Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner objected to claim 3-5 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would allow it if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant has amended claim 1 by further reciting the limitations of canceled claim 3. Because claim 3 was patentable over Takeda in view of Onuma, amended claim 1 is now patentable over these references as well.

Furthermore, Applicant believes that claim 1 remains generic after this amendment. As such, Applicant believes withdrawn claim 2 should be reinstated and maintained with these pending claims because it is dependent on generic claim 1. Claim 2, therefore, should be allowable, in light of the amendment to generic claim 1.

As a result of the amendment to generic claim 1 and the cancellation of claim 3, Applicant also has amended claim 4 to maintain proper antecedent basis. Since claims 4 and 5 are dependent of claim 1, they are also patentable. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this objection.

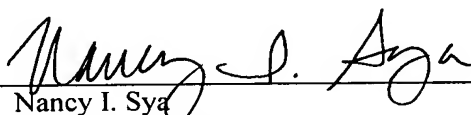
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that the application as a whole is in form for allowance. Should the Examiner have any continuing objections, Applicant respectfully asks the Examiner to contact the undersigned at 415-442-1000 in order to expedite allowance of the case. Authorization is granted to charge any outstanding fees due at this time for the continued prosecution of this matter to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP Deposit Account No. 50-0310 (matter no. 060945-0129-US).

Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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